

# Sleaford Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY102277
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 February 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Susan Hoult
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<b>Registered person</b>	Sleaford Day Nursery Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sleaford Day Nursery which includes a kids club opened in 1997 and in 2002 relocated to the current purpose-built premises situated in Sleaford, Lincolnshire. The nursery comprises of four main play rooms with toilet facilities, an office, a kitchen, a staff/laundry room, a disabled toilet and an entrance hall. There is a large enclosed outdoor play space which is divided into three areas.

The nursery serves Sleaford and the surrounding areas. It is open each weekday from 07.30 to 17.45 all year round except for bank holidays. A maximum of 84 children from birth to under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 136 children on roll of whom 117 are aged under eight years. Of these 33 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are 25 staff working regularly with the children. Of these, 20 have appropriate qualifications and four are working towards qualifications. The nursery receives support from the local authority and is affiliated to the National Day Nurseries Association.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children develop a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle and the importance of good hygiene through daily routines, discussions and activities. Children explain clearly the importance of washing their hands and using tissues correctly. Pictorial reminders help reinforce this learning. Children learn about dental hygiene through discussions, topics and cleaning their teeth after lunch. The risk of infection through cross-contamination is minimised well. For example, staff wear gloves and aprons for changing nappies, different coloured aprons for serving food and make sure parents are aware of the sick children policy. Accidents are responded to appropriately as there are always staff present who hold current first aid certificates and the easily accessible first aid boxes are kept up to date. Staff clearly record any accidents and share them with parents.

Children of all ages enjoy a good range of opportunities to take part in increasingly challenging physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle and promote children's large muscle skills, body control, special awareness and hand to eye co-ordination. For instance, children have great fun using sit-on and pedal toys, balancing on tyres, using hoops in a variety of ways and playing parachute games. They laugh as they work together co-operatively whilst developing their ball skills. Other equipment such as climbing frames and slides, a boat, a weaving frame, tunnels, swings and sand are also available. Children learn about why exercise is good for them. They are able to rest and sleep according to their needs and parents' wishes. Domestic furniture and a low-level rail are placed effectively to help babies start to pull themselves up to a standing position.

Staff and parents share and record information to meet children's dietary and health needs effectively. All staff are aware of any allergies. They have attended 'Better Food, Better Business' training giving them a good understanding of food hygiene. Several staff including the cook also have food hygiene certificates. Children gain a good understanding of healthy eating through posters, activities and discussions with the staff. They benefit from having freshly prepared, nutritionally-balanced meals. Each week a different group of children visit the town market place to buy fruit for snack time which they often help prepare themselves. Children attending the kids club appreciate being able to serve themselves from a choice of hot and cold foods after school. Water is available throughout the day for children to help themselves to make sure that they do not become thirsty.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an exceptionally secure and safe environment. Posters, exciting displays of children's art at adult- and child-height, comfortable book areas, interest tables and the use of some domestic furniture help create an extremely welcoming and inspiring environment where children gain a real sense of belonging. Staff are extremely conscientious about safety and rigorously implement policies and procedures including risk assessments, regular monitoring of accident books to identify anything that may constitute a possible hazard daily checks to the inside and outside areas and ensuring emergency bags taken on outings are kept up to date. This, staff's ongoing vigilance and their active supervision of children at all times ensure risks of accidental injury are minimised. Children move freely and safely around the rooms because activities are set out to maintain clear walkways and maximise play opportunities whilst

ensuring staff can see all areas used. Children use a superb range of stimulating, well-maintained and developmentally-appropriate toys and equipment which are rotated to give children a broad range of experiences. Many are stored at a low level so that they are easily accessible to children very effectively promoting choice and independence.

Staff have an excellent approach to explaining and reinforcing safe practices and allowing children freedom to move around whilst setting safe limits so that children increasingly learn how to keep themselves safe and support others to do so. For example, children remind each other to hold the low-level handrail whilst walking downstairs so they do not fall and hurt themselves or others. Luminous wrist straps are used for taking children for walks and staff ensure all legal requirements are met when taking children out in the nursery's vehicles. Staff ensure children learn about the importance of road and stranger safety through ongoing discussion and play. Children soon learn how to leave the building quickly and safely through regularly practising fire drills which are clearly explained to visitors in case they are present during an evacuation. Each drill is evaluated fully to ensure best practice is followed.

Staff further safeguard children by implementing vigilant procedures to prevent unauthorised access to children through a coded entry system to each area of the building and outdoor security cameras. Clear records indicate who may collect a child and staff never leave them unsupervised with persons who have not been suitably vetted. Several staff have attended child protection training, they have an excellent understanding of procedures and know how to put these into place should they have concerns about the welfare of a child. This is reinforced through policies and displays in the staff room.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the setting. They all take part in a wide range of enjoyable, stimulating and challenging activities. Staff foster children's emotional development well by building warm, caring relationships with them. Staff working with children aged under three years refer to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use their observations of individual children's interests and achievements to plan purposeful play with a balance of adult-led and child-led activities. Babies benefit from consistent routines for sleeping, playing and eating and are given a good level of support by the staff to begin actively exploring their environment. For instance a baby laughs as they take items out of the 'treasure basket', two babies have great fun getting messy as they paint and another is fascinated as they explore plastic bottles containing different objects which make varying sounds as they are shaken. Toddlers eagerly join in action rhymes and excitedly point to parts of their bodies as asked. They help put on their coats and enjoy playing outside before coming inside for lunch where they independently feed themselves, receiving support as needed. Babies and toddlers regularly enjoy a range of sensory and exploratory play using man-made and natural materials helping them make sense of themselves and their surroundings and become increasingly imaginative and creative. School-age children attend the kids club within the nursery. The club has an animated atmosphere where staff support the children well, participating in, and extending, play as appropriate whilst recognising that at times children like to enjoy their leisure time together without adult involvement. Three children talk about enjoying attending as they have lots of opportunities for craft whilst they enjoy blow and splatter painting. Others concentrate on writing poems and making them into books using a hole punch. Another group of children sew a choice of materials to make small stuffed animals whilst happily chatting with the staff.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and are currently developing their knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The nursery's philosophy is based on helping children achieve well in all areas of learning through focussing on their individual needs and interests through a plan, do and review approach. Plans follow children's interests and are added to day by day through staff observing and talking to children, to make sure they receive appropriate challenge to develop their learning and skills. Although plans clearly show learning intentions for children and reflect a broad and balanced curriculum and evaluations of assessments through observation in the form of learning logs are detailed, individual starting points are not always fully taken into account to enable each child to cover all areas of learning evenly over time. Staff are confident at adapting their teaching methods to capture children's interests and motivate them to learn through play, investigation and exploration. They are skilled at firing children's imaginations and extending conversations so that children learn from each other as well as the staff. Pictorial representations of types of activities and routines are used extremely effectively to help children plan and recall aiding consolidation of new skills and learning. Staff manage children's behaviour well using praise and explanation to help children learn to take responsibility for their own actions. The learning environment is stimulating and good use is made of the indoor and outdoor areas. The range of easily accessible resources and the staff's ability to create activities such as a 'feelings' board game enhance children's learning.

Children are confident, interested and well motivated to learn increasingly persevering with tasks. They form good relationships with adults and other children and take turns and share well. Children particularly enjoy planning what they are going to do and then later recalling and discussing what they have done. Children work co-operatively together at 'tidy-up' time and are able to put their coats and hats on with increasing independence. Children use talk well to express themselves and organise their play with others. They enjoy listening to stories which are expressively read and are beginning to identify where the author's name is written on books and what illustrators and 'blurb' are. Children are developing their mark-making skills well, have free access to writing materials and are being encouraged by staff to practise forming letters in different mediums such as sand and through using large paint brushes and water on the outside wall. Children are developing their phonological awareness through a variety of activities and practise clapping syllables of their own and other's names. Children are developing a good grasp of mathematical language and numbers for labels and counting. For example, children count spontaneously as they imaginatively play with a doll's house and talk about a toy lion being too large to go in. Children weigh ingredients during baking activities and have many opportunities for problem solving, sequencing and sorting. Children have many opportunities to explore, gather information and satisfy their curiosity through first hand experiences which helps them make sense of the world and bring learning to life. For example, they grow plants and vegetables in the greenhouse, show delight as they investigate what happens when they mix shaving foam with paint blocks and 'squirty' soap and use magnifying glasses to inspect mini beasts. Children discuss the ingredients and change of textures as they make pancakes and learn about different forms of dress as they try on the vicar's robes in the local church. They develop a sense of time and place as they talk about their families, significant events at home and join in activities such as looking at old photographs of Sleaford town centre as it used to be. Children competently use tools such as pencils, paint brushes, scissors and the computer mouse with safety and increasing skill. They laugh together as they learn how to toss the pancakes they have made. Staff value children's creativity encouraging them to use their own ideas and express themselves imaginatively. This helps them make connections between one area of learning and another. Children design and make using a range of natural and man-made materials they access freely. Children have great fun dressing up and are able to

admire themselves in the full length mirrors. Children listen to an aeroplane flying overhead and then use their imaginations to decide where it is going and who is on it. This creates a spontaneous discussion amongst a few children about other means of transport. Children listen and move to a variety of music and enjoy using musical instruments, singing and ribbon dancing.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Staff know the children they are responsible for as key workers well, treat them with equal concern, cherish them as individuals valuing and respecting their family backgrounds and traditions. This means that all children are welcomed and play a full part in the life of the nursery. Staff very effectively support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language, creating a fully inclusive environment. Staff actively listen to children, are genuinely interested in what they say and do effectively using the information to help develop relationships, play and learning opportunities. This results in children developing high levels of confidence and self-esteem enabling them to make positive choices and decisions. Children are given many opportunities through play and discussion to accept how their feelings change at times and how to express these appropriately to others. This helps children identify their own needs and those of others. An example of this is when a child feels tired and their friend goes with them to have a rest on the cushions.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children increase their awareness of their own and differing cultures through planned activities, accessing toys and books that show positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability, and celebrating a wide range of festivals which parents are invited to help research. The children learn about their local community through outings and from people who visit the nursery to share their interests. For instance, children walk to the river to feed the ducks, visit an art gallery, pet shop, delicatessen, library, supermarket, the fire station, local church and a local mill. Visitors include the community police, 'Zoo Lab', 'Sound Lincs', the library van and a local vet. Children's behaviour is very good because staff set clear but realistic boundaries, use a positive approach to behaviour management, are consistent in their approach, and are calm but firm making sure children understand what is expected of them. A reward system that children contribute to in teams help them focus on how their behaviour can affect others.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff respect parents' wishes and build positive relationships with them so that they can become as aware of their needs and feelings as well as those of their children. Staff encourage parents to share what they know about their children verbally and through an 'All about me' booklet so that they work together to support each child as an individual. Each parent receives good quality information about the nursery including details about the Foundation Stage or 'Birth to three matters' for children aged under three years. Individual assessments of children's progress and achievements are available for parents to see and discuss with staff as they wish as well as at appointed review meetings. Parents comment positively about the nursery describing it as 'absolutely fantastic', explaining how they value the staff who are 'very approachable', 'friendly', 'share information well' and are 'very conscious of confidentiality'. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning in a variety of ways including open days and the use of dolls and a bear that are taken home to support links between home and nursery by write-ups and pictures of what they have done. Staff monitor the effectiveness of their relationships with parents through discussion and questionnaires.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in rooms relating to their age. After school and in the holidays when there are less children on the premises the four-year-old children join the three-year-old children for activities. Children's care is enhanced by the dedicated owner, manager and staff who are all very good role models, have a clear vision for the further development of quality practice, an extremely high regard for the well-being of all children and work hard to meet their individual needs. Children feel secure and develop a good sense of their own self-worth through the effective key worker system and the deployment of staff with whom they have very warm, friendly relationships. Staff have access to professional literature and actively contribute to the day to day running of the nursery helping to create a positive, stimulating, welcoming and calm atmosphere. Effective procedures are in place to help make children's transition from one area of the nursery to the next and ultimately to school a positive experience. Documentation is comprehensive, is stored confidentially and forms a good framework for the care of all children attending. However, although daily attendance registers are kept they do not clearly show at all times which children are present in each area or which staff are caring for them.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The owner, manager and early years manager have high expectations of themselves, the staff and the children. They work closely together and through thorough monitoring and evaluation of the nursery education provided help create an effective and improving setting where children are very safe, confident and make good progress towards the early learning goals. Action plans are drawn up prioritising what needs to be done next to improve quality and parental questionnaires are thoroughly reviewed. Work is currently in progress to further develop the outdoor play areas using natural resources and schemas are being introduced as a further teaching skill. Effective recruitment and vetting procedures, thorough induction, appraisals, regular meetings and training ensure that children are well protected and are cared for by staff who are motivated, knowledgeable and consistent in their approach. The staff feel valued, are well qualified and work together cohesively as a team under the very effective leadership of the manager who encourages them to keep the aims of 'Every Child Matters' in mind whilst working. Overall children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

As a result of recommendations made at the last inspection staff have developed their awareness and understanding of behaviour management through in-house training resulting in effective techniques being used to enable children to recognise boundaries and behave very well. There is a broad range of activities and resources that reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity and disability helping children develop their understanding of diversity. Since the last inspection staff have worked as a team under the leadership of the early years manager to improve planning enabling children to more effectively learn through play.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure registers clearly show the staff and children present in each area at all times.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop next steps planning further to ensure individual starting points are fully taken into account enabling each child to cover all areas of learning evenly over time.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)